Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte

Begründet von

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herausgegeben von

Christian Albrecht und Christoph Marksches

Band 119

De Gruyter

Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity

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De Gruyter

In memoriam Boudewijn Dehandschutter
(1945-2011)

ISBN 978-3-11-026855-3

e-ISBN 978-3-11-026860-7

ISSN 1861-5996

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Episcopal elections in late antiquity / [edited by] Johan Leemans ... [et al].
p. cm. — (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte, ISSN 1861-5996 ; Bd. 119)
English, French, and German.
Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
ISBN 978-3-11-026855-3 (hardcover 23 x 15,5 : alk. paper)
1. Bishops — Appointment, call, and election — History. 2. Church
history — Primitive and early church, ca. 30–600. I. Leemans, Johan,
1965–
BV664.E65 2011
262'.1220901 dc23

2011022770

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet
über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

© 2011 Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin/Boston

Druck: Hubert & Co. GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen
∞ Gedruckt auf säurefreiem Papier

Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

8253801-20

Preface

The present volume is the result of the conference 'Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity (ca. 250-600 A.D.)', held in Leuven between 26 and 28 October 2009. Its aim was to re-assess the phenomenon of episcopal elections from the broadest possible perspective, examining the various factors, personalities, rules and habits that played a role in the process that resulted in one specific candidate becoming the new bishop. In particular it was the purpose of the conference to approach this phenomenon through a large number of case studies. The conference was a joyful event, profiting from a late autumn sun and the excellent facilities of the university's conference center in the middle of the beautiful surroundings of the Grand Béguinage of Leuven. After a rigorous process of peer-review and due revision, a number of papers was selected which form, together with the main papers, a representative collection of case studies. We consciously do not wish to cover the later Roman empire in its full chronological and geographical extension. This is not only practically impossible, but it would also generate a false impression of homogeneity. The volume rather wishes to display the variety of practices that existed in different places and at different times, and to present new dimensions of the phenomenon by drawing on distinct methodologies. In this way, we hope to provide building blocks for a future synthesis of episcopal elections and to contribute to the continuous new assessment of the crucial figure of the late antique bishop by focussing more on ordinary bishops and the social and political dimension of their position.

The conference was part of a project sponsored by the Flemish Fund for Scientific Research, entitled: "Nobody Should Become Bishop before He is Thirty Years Old". A Historical and Theological Study of Episcopal Succession in Late Antiquity (250-600 AD) (Project G.0575.07N). The FSR-F project-funding provided the two collaborators, Dr. S.W.J. Keough and Dra. C. Nicolaye (part time), with the freedom to devote themselves to scholarly work on episcopal succession. Moreover, the FSR-F supported the conference with a substantial conference grant, allowing for the invitation of additional keynote speakers. We express our warmest thanks for this generous support. We also thank wholeheartedly the Re-

search Council of the K.U. Leuven for their financial support of the conference.

During the editing of this book we received support for which it is a pleasant duty to express thanks. First of all we thank the Faculty of Theology (K.U. Leuven), the Faculty of Arts (Ghent University), the Lichtenberg Kolleg (DFG-supported Institute of Advanced Study at the University of Göttingen) and the Department of Ancient History of the RWTH-Aachen for the institutional framework and support provided. We express our thanks to Walter de Gruyter Verlag in the person of Dr. A. Döhner, the responsible editor, for the smooth cooperation towards the publication of this book. Thanks are also due to Hajnalka Tamas (Leuven) and Andy Hilkens (Ghent) who helped with the final editing and with the indices.

When this volume neared completion, Professor Boudewijn Dehandschutter, the main promoter of the project passed away. He had already been ill, recovered during the autumn of 2010 but ultimately the disease got firmly hold on him again. He passed away in peace of mind. He was a great scholar, an unsurpassable Doktorvater and a good friend. We remember him with admiration, gratefulness and affection. This volume is dedicated to his memory.

Peter Van Nuffelen
Johan Leemans

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Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity: Structures and Perspectives

Peter Van Nuffelen – Johan Leemans

In the second book of his *Ecclesiastical History* (2.6.3) Socrates writes about the events surrounding the succession of bishop Alexander of Constantinople in 337. According to the church historian, Alexander gave his community the following message on his deathbed: "If you want an honest and wise teacher, choose the young presbyter Paulus. If you want somebody who distinguishes himself by giving an impression of piety, then choose the old deacon Macedonius". Despite the clarity of the deceased bishop's advice, both candidates did not get a clear majority behind them. Factors playing a role here are not only their different personality and way of life Socrates is referring to but also their different theological position within the Trinitarian debates of their time: Paul seems to have been attached more to a Nicene-inspired theology while Macedonius seems to have adopted a more arianising, subordinatist position. Political pressure nor riots in the Constantinopolitan streets helped to resolve the tensions and ultimately each group ordained its own candidate. The deadlock did not last long: emperor Constantius II supported Macedonius and sent Paul into exile.

This incident illustrates the complexity of late antique episcopal succession, in which many elements played a role, such as: local traditions (the apparent usage that the bishop had a say in the election of his successor); church politics and doctrinal conflicts (here "Arianism" versus a "Nicene" theology); imperial politics (the intervention by Constantius II); canon and civil law (was the "double ordination" of Macedonius and Paul lawful and was it lawful that the emperor intervened in church affairs?); the role of the people that voiced its opinion through acclamations and street riots; theological ideas about the "ideal bishop"; the personality and charisma of each of the candidates.

The present volume contributes to a reassessment of the phenomenon of episcopal elections from the broadest possible perspective, examining the varied combination of factors, personalities, rules and habits that played a role in the process that eventually resulted in one candidate tri-